

Louisiana Legal Research, Third edition

By Mary Garvey Algero (2017). 202 pages, ISBN: 9781531007935. \$30

Subject: State-specific legal research (Louisiana)

Useful for: Useful for anyone who needs to research Louisiana legal materials, or anyone who wants a good introduction to the quirks of the Louisiana legal system.

Format: Chapters with table of contents and index.

Reviewer's Comments:

The Louisiana legal system is unique in the U.S. and often confusing to those who are more accustomed to common law jurisdictions. In Louisiana Legal Research, Mary Garvey Algero provides an excellent introduction into some of the quirks of how the Louisiana legal system works alongside the promised instruction on how to research Louisiana materials.

Algero starts by going over the fundamentals of legal research, including types of legal authority, with an emphasis on how Louisiana is different from most other U.S. jurisdictions (such as the fact that Louisiana court decisions are not considered a primary source, yet still have mandatory authority in certain circumstances—it's different here, y'all). She then addresses some general principles of the research process, as well ways to research more efficiently.

After the more general material, Algero gets to the meat of the issue, researching Louisiana law. She not only tells the reader how to find the material, but discusses the importance of various types of material, something that is often different in Louisiana's unique hybrid of civil and common law. Something frequently and specifically addressed is the primacy of legislation among Louisiana sources, as the state's Civil Code, in its very first Article, names legislation and custom as the primary sources of the state's law.

Algero also includes very specific practical advice for negotiating legal materials. For example, when discussing Louisiana legislative history, after outlining the specific legislative process here, she provides information on researching through the Louisiana Legislature's online portal. Then she goes into how to research older materials in print, including which libraries in the state are most likely to have this material and even includes the phone numbers for the House and Senate offices that provide information on committee hearings.

Louisiana Legal Research is a good reference for law libraries, but much of its value lies not in the instruction on researching Louisiana Law (though that is valuable and well done), but on its explanation of the Louisiana legal system and its differences from the rest of the United States. Anyone from elsewhere who needs to deal with some aspect of Louisiana law should definitely consider keeping this book as reference material.

Reviewed by: Reviewed by Melissa Strickland, Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center, in 2018.